

Reducing while Spring Cleaning

After what seemed like a never-ending game of will it, won't it end - winter is over, and spring is finally here. For many households, that means a much-needed spring cleaning. Read on to learn how to successfully reduce waste while deep cleaning and decluttering by repurposing, recycling, and properly disposing of materials.

As you begin deep cleaning, consider using old washcloths, dish towels, or other rags instead of paper towels to clean surfaces. You can further reduce waste by using a reusable glass spray bottle and choosing bulk cleaning solutions or making your own homemade all-purpose cleaner. Visit us on the web for the recipe!

Rather than throwing out all the items you no longer need or want, you can repurpose, recycle, donate, or sell them. As you begin cleaning out and organizing these spaces, prepare by gathering a few boxes and a marker to label them.

Have a box for things you can repurpose, such as old clothes in poor condition to be used as rags. Have another container for recycling; think of old documents, magazines, phone books, etc. Lastly, have a box for donations or items to sell. You may need more than one box for these as you work through the rooms and maybe even the basement of your home.

For decluttering and organizing under the sink, cleaning supply closet, and the garage, be sure to have an additional box for household hazardous waste materials. Household hazardous wastes include items you can't recycle or throw away in your regular trash, like batteries, pesticides, cleaners, electronics, oil-based paints, and tires. Spring is a great time to start this box, as our first collection event is coming up on June 3rd at the Barry Expo Center. Learn more and see what will be accepted at www.barrycounty.org/barrycountyrecycles/household_hazardous_waste.php.

Try to keep the trash to a minimum by repurposing, recycling, donating, and properly disposing of your materials as you work from room to room. For more information and disposal locations, visit www.barrycountyrecycles.org and use the interactive map or Recycling and Disposal Guide.

Rachel Frantz serves as Barry County's Recycling Coordinator and writes columns to answer commonly asked recycling questions. Have a question about recycling or a topic idea for this column? We want to hear from you! Email recycle@barrycounty.org or visit www.barrycountyrecycles.org for more information and to get all your recycling questions answered.